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ABSTRACT

"Confronting the New Politics of Child and Family Policy in the United States" is an 18-month project designed to help states, local government, and the voluntary sector as they respond to the social policy debates and changes precipitated by the 104th Congress. The project's main vehicle, aside from exploratory and analytic work, is a series of consultations and mini-conferences, each based on one or more commissioned overview papers. This document reports on the fourth mini-conference, a meeting on child care in the context of welfare "reform" held on June 14, 1996. The take-off point for the discussions was the new consensus that states would have more flexibility in setting child care policies and fewer Federal funds would be available. Participants discussed a commissioned paper by Helen Blank, "Child Care in the Context of Welfare Reform." It is asserted that the main focus of the child care and welfare debate is around money, rather than the needs of children and the quality of the care provided. Child care developments in Arizona, Illinois, and Texas were profiled and discussed, and some observations by the editors summarize the discussions. Participants discussed child care issues without knowing what form the Federal legislation would finally take. Appendixes present key child care provisions of the welfare law and list the mini-conference participants. (SLD)

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